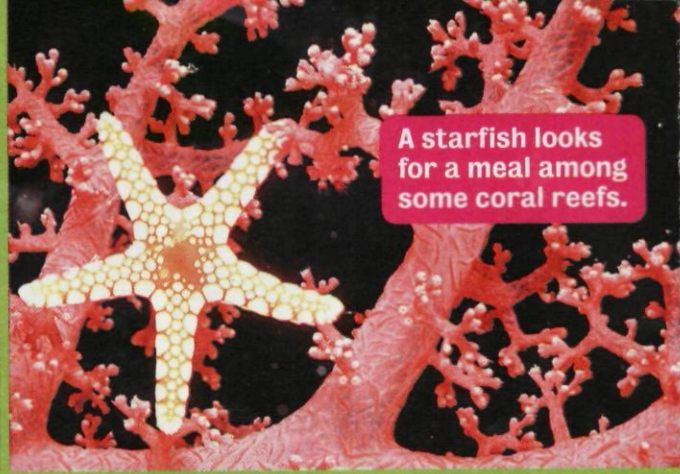




A lucky parrot fish finds some food on a coral reef.



A starfish looks for a meal among some coral reefs.

Coral Reef Rescue!

Across the world, people will celebrate Earth Day by helping coral reefs. These ocean habitats are dropping in numbers, due to fishing by humans, global warming, and pollution in the oceans.



Kids help clean the sea in a Dive In To Earth Day event.

Counting on Coral

Coral reefs are undersea environments made up of the skeletons of sea animals called *corals*. They also include the remains of algae and shellfish, along with sand.

Many sea species depend on coral reefs. Parrot fish hide in reefs as protection from predators. Starfish **rely**, or count on, reefs for food. Jellyfish and sea turtles use them for shelter.

Humans know that many fish can be caught in the reefs. Some fishermen, however, use dynamite to catch more fish. When they do this, they blow up pieces of the reefs to catch the fish that try to swim away.

Also, global warming has led to rising sea temperatures. This change has caused many reefs to suffer from *coral bleaching*. As a result, the bright, colorful reefs lose their color, turn white, and often crumble.

Rescuing Reefs

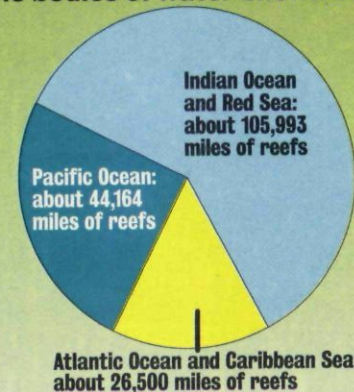
Groups like the Coral Reef Alliance work to help the reefs. They began Dive In To Earth Day in 2000 to educate people about coral

reefs. Through this program, people around the world spend Earth Day diving in the sea to explore the reefs. They also clean up underwater trash and organize diving tours for kids.

"Dive In To Earth Day creates a better understanding of our beautiful and delicate underwater world," says diving expert Tanya Streeter.

Bodies of Water With Coral Reefs

A recent study says there are about 176,655 miles of coral reefs across the world. These reefs can be found in the bodies of water shown below.



SOURCES: World Atlas of Coral Reefs and Reef Relief

Cause and Effect:

A **cause** is the reason why something happens. An **effect** is the result of something happening. On this page, underline the causes of coral reefs dropping in numbers across the world.



Kids Take Action on Earth Day!
Learn how you can help the planet
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